

Anarchist Worker

**Trust Houses
Forte**
-SPECIAL FEATURE

February/March 1976 Number 33

10p

THE RIGHT LINES UP

RECENT ACTIONS of the National Association For Freedom show how scared the ruling class is.

So scared that parts of its right wing is organising for attacks on workers.

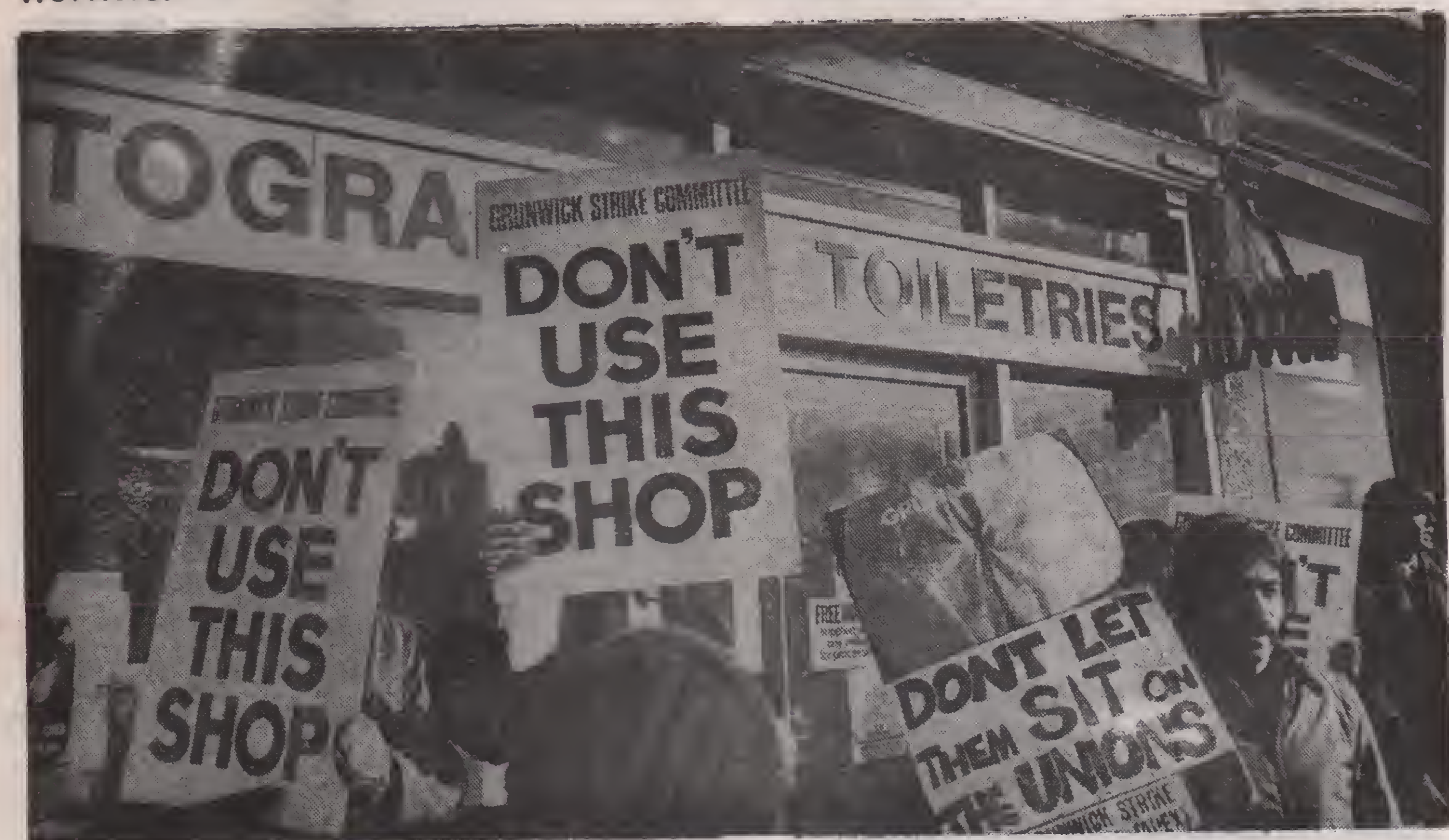
NAFF's injunction against the Union of Postal Workers not to black post to the strike-hit firm of Grunwick in North London, followed up by a similar injunction as regards telegrams and operator connected phone calls to South Africa shows this, as does yet another obscenely racist speech from Enoch Powell in his attempts to get white workers at the throats of black workers.

This right wing, while spouting a lot of hot air about freedom, is attempting to take away any gains the working class has won in this country over the last hundred years.

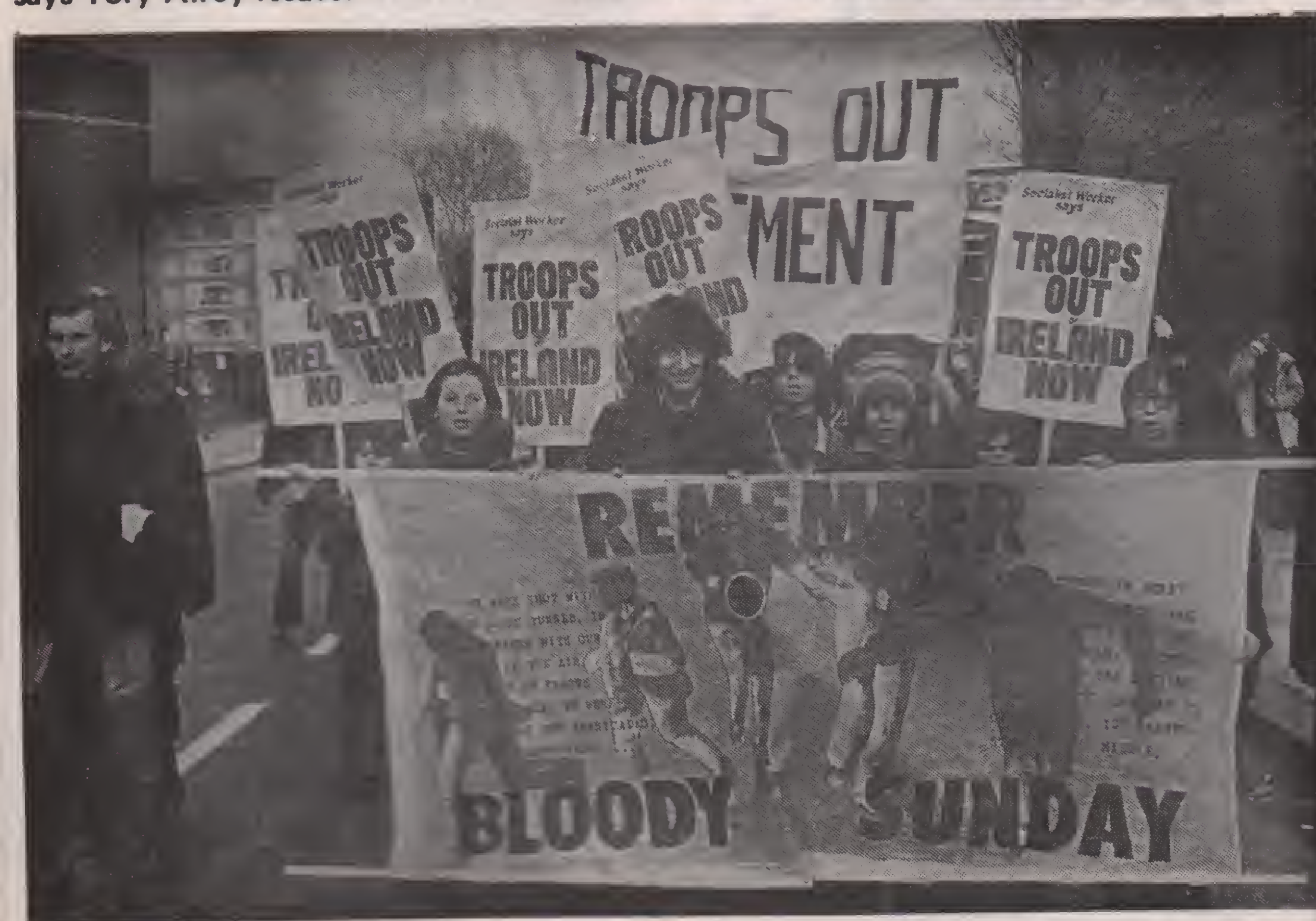
Witness Eldon Griffiths, Tory MP for Bury St. Edmunds, in a speech in which he attacked trade union closed shops.

Freedom?

Witness Airey Neave, Tory spokesman on Northern Ireland, when he talked about freedom — that's a joke — in Northern Ireland. "The Government, despite the miserable activities of the Troops Out Movement, must persist in defence of that freedom".



PICKETTING Grunwick's outlets on the Day of Action, 29th January. The National Association for Freedom would like to ban actions like these. BELOW: Drawing attention to the British problem in Ireland... "miserable activities" says Tory Airey Neave. Photos Michael Sheridan and Mark Rusher (IFL)



Africa and any attempt to assist the struggle for freedom there is important.

Overrule

The case also shows the right-wing bias of the judiciary, and the attempts of one section of the bosses to overrule through the courts any decisions of the Labour Government.

Silkin represents the social-democratic wing of the ruling class, who want to maintain a left cover for the benefit of progressives and radicals, and who desire a liberalisation in South Africa which they hope will act as a safety valve against deeper and really significant changes there.

In the Labour Party itself, Shirley Williams leads an attack on the left of the party, and confirms what

not, as yet, been a spectacular response to rising prices and cutbacks, workers around the country have been involved in a series of strikes over union recognition and equal pay.

Experience and organisation are being built up in fights that they are fairly certain they can win if they show determination.

TRICO, in West London, for example, where women won equal pay after a long and bitter strike.

Automat, in Swinton, Manchester where 25 workers won union recognition after a year of struggle, despite financial support to the boss from the NAFF.

And the strike of Grunwicks in Willesden continues for basic Trade Union rights, still solid after many weeks. (See also Trust Houses Forte, in this issue).



This lorry driver was persuaded not to cross the picket line by women on strike for equal pay at Magnavox, Barking.

In other words, make sure that Catholic and Protestant workers remain divided, imprison or kill any resistance, and maintain high unemployment.

What kind of freedom is it where machine gun nests are on almost every corner, where Catholics are discriminated against in jobs and housing and education, and where whole neighbourhoods go in fear of the British army bully boys?

And what kind of freedom is it at Grunwicks where workers are victimised for attempting to form a union?

What kind of freedom is it in South Africa where blacks and coloureds suffer incredible exploitation policed by the vile system of apartheid?

Let's be clear where we stand over the UPW and the NAFF. Tom Jackson is one of the more right-wing union leaders, and the black on South Africa post could have been referred to the membership.

Nevertheless, the whole case shows ruling class fears over South

many know already when she openly speaks out against socialism and any attempt to get the Labour Party to adopt socialist measures.

Anarchist Worker says that any such attempts are doomed to failure.

Socialism cannot be legislated through parliament, nor does it mean paternalistic state control in the supposed 'interests' of the working class.

The working class alone, by its own activity, can build socialism.

At the same time we should attempt to get through to lower ranks of the Labour Party, pointing out the bankruptcy of the Party and how the Labour right wingers are attempting to stifle any opposition, and how the real fight for socialism must be fought outside the Party in the workplace and neighbourhood.

Waking up

While the bourgeoisie organises its forces, the working class is not completely asleep. While there has

In Sheffield, 25,000 engineering workers came out in protest against the threatened closure of the Capital Tools factory, part of the Edgar Allen Balfour group, which would put 400 out of work.

At MagnaVox, in Barking, East London, 150 women struck for equal pay, and in Greenwich 70 steelworkers struck over safety at work.

In Newham, five women workers refused to clear the dangerous substance asbestos, and came out. Their strike has been a long and hard one, with little support from their union officials.

Actions continue up and down the country. Slowly workers are building up resistance, often against the union bureaucracy as well as the bosses.

It is very important for long term success that a genuine rank and file is built, so that nation-wide support can be gained for these local strikes and serious opposition to the bosses attacks can be mounted.

Editorial Collective.

EGA stays OK!

WORKERS OF THE EGA Hospital for women in London have been occupying the hospital for over three months. The occupation, which is in response to DHSS attempts to close the hospital, is supported by all the Unions and staff involved in its running.

Doctors, nurses and all other staff are continuing to work as usual and patients are still being admitted.

A continuous picket of workers and supporters is in action to monitor arrivals and to prevent the removal of patients and machinery.

The hospital is the bigger of only two general hospitals in the country run by women for women.

It has been steadily run down over the past few years and as early as October 1974 hints of the forthcoming closure led to the formation within the hospital of an Action Committee composed of various sections of the staff and including one patient.

In February last year Barbara Castle announced that the hospital would be moved from its present site on Euston Road in Camden and incorporated into a district hospital "in an identifiable form".

No adequate reasons were given for moving the hospital and the workers do not take seriously the proposition that it can be incorporated into the Whittington Hospital in Islington without losing its identity as a women's hospital and with no loss of facilities.

Job loss

The move will undoubtedly mean a reduction in health care facilities in both Camden and Islington, as well as a loss of jobs.

The hospital was founded by Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, the first woman to qualify as a doctor in Britain, to give women the chance to train and practice as doctors and to provide health care for women by medical staff of their own sex. As such, its closure is an attack not only on health standards in general, but on women in particular.

Women have always received second class treatment under the national health service.

Many of our health problems are treated unsympathetically or passed off as neuroses. This is particularly true in the case of menstrual problems and minor disorders of genital and reproductive organs, such as cystitis, thrush etc.

Women make on average 25% more visits to a doctor than men, yet because of the shortage of women in the medical profession, few women have the possibility of being treated by a doctor of their own sex. A member of the shop stewards committee at the hospital described "women doctors" as the single most important service of the E.G.A.

Government cuts in health spending will inevitably reduce still further both treatment and training facilities for women. For example, while the infant mortality rate has been rising steadily, and is now one of the highest in Europe, the DHSS "Priorities for Health and Public Social Services in England" include a 70% cut in maternity services.

In this situation the defence of a hospital such as the EGA becomes crucial.

Need

In addition to general women's health care the hospital has fulfilled an important need by providing outpatient abortions for hundreds of women, including many from outside the AHA and London who would not otherwise have been able to obtain one at all.

From the time of the February 1976 announcement the campaign to save the hospital has gathered momentum, gaining the support of women's organisations, Trade Unions, political and local groups, and culminating in a march of over 1,000 people on the Day of Action last July. Of particular importance has been the support of women patients who have insisted on being referred to the hospital despite its situation of inadequate financial resources, lack of backing from the AHA and imminently threatened closure.

The decision to occupy was taken by the Unions operating in the hospital (NUPE, ASTMS, NALGO & COHSE) in an attempt to prevent the removal of machinery and patients.

It has been endorsed by all the staff as a final weapon in their fight to save the hospital.

The campaign is demanding:

**NO CLOSURE
NO REDUNDANCIES
MEND THE LIFT** (mysteriously

found to be faulty after the Castle announcement of the move, so that the wards and operating theatre above the 1st floor have been out of use for a year)

A BIGGER AND BETTER HOSPITAL FOR WOMEN ON ITS PRESENT SITE.

The implications of this campaign go beyond its immediate objective of saving one hospital.

The EGA is just one of many services affected by the massive cuts in social services spending. 120 hospitals are threatened in London alone.

The occupation challenges the workings of the Health service, especially in its relation to women.

At the same time it is an example of how workers and the public can join together to fight in a direct way against attacks on their rights and living standards.

A threat by the AHA to move out machinery on the 28th January has been postponed and the hospital has been given 8 weeks grace. In the meantime help is needed on the picket line — contact Arthur Churchly at the EGA, Euston Road, London NW1 tel: 387 2501 ext. 50.

The EGA Campaign meets every Tuesday night at 6.30pm at the EGA.

The rich get richer...

1976 SAW RECORD CROPS throughout the world, with the wheat harvest topping 400m tons for the first time ever. The world stockpile of wheat now stands at 156m tons, an increase of 41% over 1975.

Does all this extra food mean people getting more to eat? Our food correspondent investigates.

In the last thirty years world food production has increased by 155%. In the same period, population has risen less: 67%.

This would seem to mean an increase in the amount of food available for each individual — yet in fact the opposite has been the case.

At the same time there have been plans for drastic action to slow down the birth rate.

Forced sterilisations in India have resulted in the murder of sterilisation programme workers.

Concentration

The problem is clearly not one of population but of distribution. Ownership of land has become concentrated — fewer and fewer hands, with 2.5% of the larger landowners (not including smallholders and farmers under 250 acres) owning 3/4 of all the world's land, and of these 0.23% control over half.

They have increasingly tended to be the food multi-nationals, whose primary concern is profits rather than actual needs.

In many third-world countries, especially Chile, etc, foodstuffs are actually exported to the developed countries, in spite of shortages and the fact that people in the developed countries consume on average three times as much per head.

Withheld

Capitalism's food policy is to encourage a scarcity system in order to drive prices up. This involves withholding produce from the market, taking land out of cultivation (last year the EEC had a stockpile of 370,000 tons of beef; Argentina had a surplus of 65,106 live cattle; in addition to the wheat stockpile, butter mountains and wine lakes).

This naturally tends to drain food away from the poorer countries to the richer ones where higher prices can be set. The world's largest food exporter, the US, exports largely to the EEC countries.

The resultant picture is one of enormous contradiction. As world food supplies actually increase, the amount that the poorer countries can afford gets less.

The situation is likely to worsen as the increase in world food production slows. The multi-nationals will try to maintain their rate of profit at the expense of hundreds of thousands of lives lost through famine, and falling standards of nutrition for the two-thirds of the world that are already underfed.

P.G.

PUTTING THE BOOT IN

Building Contractors Henry Boot Ltd., well known to York residents for the precarious construction of the Smiths/Singer complex in Coney St. have, believe it or not, won a major safety award for the second year running.

It was awarded for the 'most significant contribution to the improvement of safety in the UK building and civil engineering industry during the year'.

Mr. Charles Cockford, the firm's safety officer, will receive a framed certificate.

In May last year 12 men were fired (given the 'boot') for complaining about safety conditions at the Coney St. site.

For example scaffolding was secured by being strapped to a chimney, an unsafe shortcut, but made more precarious when

the men were asked to demolish the chimney!

The men were also asked to burrow down a 9ft shaft under the foundations and tunnel through them — but no supports were provided for this.

At this stage the men complained and then began an occupation of the building that lasted five weeks, until they were reinstated and safety precautions taken.

During the same period workers on another Boot site in Northampton were also feeling the full force of unsafe conditions.

On that site 3 men were killed in as many weeks and another lost an arm!

As one of the workers on the Coney St site succinctly commented when told of Boot's award "You must be . . . ing joking".

York Free Press Nov 1976

ASIANS HARRASSED

Over the past few months Southdown Press in Leamington Spa has been investigating the activities of the Environmental Health Department, following rumours that the department was singling out Asians for special treatment.

They visited a typical multi-racial owner-occupied street and called at each house to ask if the occupants had been visited by an Environmental Health Officer (EHO) in the past year.

They found that whilst none of the white families had been visited in living memory, all the Asian families were visited regularly every few months!

None of the families had been warned beforehand of the visits, though the department is legally required to give at least 24 hours notice.

The purpose of the visits, at least the reason given, was to 'ascertain whether the houses were overcrowded'.

None of the houses visited were in multiple occupation, and in most cases any people staying in the house when the EHO visited who were not members of the immediate family were only temporary guests.

Appeal

But in one case, a family of seven had their nephew staying with them and the officer told the family he had to get out.

Eventually he was allowed to stay when the occupier appealed against the decision — this was in a house with four bedrooms and two living rooms.

Similarly, another Asian family, consisting of 2 adults, one child and a lodger in a house with 3 bedrooms, one kitchen, one living room and one bathroom, were told to provide an additional bathroom for the lodger.

Environmental Health Officers have demanded to see passports and other proof of identity of Asian families and their visitors.

Upstairs

They often went 'upstairs to have a look around' uninvited and without

written authorisation to carry out such an inspection, and called repeatedly at houses in the middle of the day knowing the owners were sleeping after working a night shift.

More sinister was the case where after visiting a house the EHO approached the Community Relations Officer and asked him to find out if the guests in a house were illegal immigrants.

The Community Relations Officer refused, objecting to the harassment of this family, but the EHO made two more 'surprise' visits to the house until finally the occupier was bullied into asking his guests to leave.

These intrusions into privacy and the prying, dictatorial approach of the Environmental Health Department are very serious when viewed in the context of deteriorating community relations in Leamington Spa.

Protest

Following the murder of an Asian woman in November — she was tied to a chair and burnt to death — and several racist knifings of Asians returning from work, local immigrant representatives and the Trades Council sent a protest to the Home Office.

This document detailed the lack of protection the immigrant was receiving from racist attacks, and the way in which the National Front and National Party are allowed to carry on their activities in the area.

Other complaints were that a grant for Urban Aid for a multi-racial community centre has twice been refused with no reasons given; that young immigrants were discriminated against when they applied for apprenticeships.

Equal pay for non-white women in the area was a nonsense the document stated, as so many were employed as home-workers or in sweatshops where pay was below subsistence level for all immigrants who could not speak English were not informed of their rights in DHSS offices, it said.

The document concluded that self defence against racist attacks, race hatred, and discrimination by petty bureaucrats was the only meaningful, effective action Asians and other non-whites could take in this situation.

Sharon Hayden



Photo: Angela Phillips (IFL)

The
tyranny
of
sTRuCTurEleSSneSS

by
Jo Freeman

5p

In this pamphlet Jo Freeman attempts to sketch out an approach to organisation that would prevent the growth of elitist leaderships—which both highly centralised and highly informal groupings tend to produce. In revulsion from the tyrannical structures of governments, unions and other organisations some anarchists have shied away from any meaningful consideration of self-organisation. The Anarchist Workers Association played no part in the writing of this pamphlet but has found it highly applicable to the ineffectuality of anarchism in Britain in recent decades.

Send 5p + 7p p&p to AWA, 13 Coltman Street, Hull, Humberside for a copy. 10 or more 3½p each. Please make cheques/POs payable to: 'AWA General Fund'.

DEPORT THE CIA!

THE POWERFUL role of the security services in securing the deportations of journalists Mark Hosenball and Philip Agee is increasingly clearly being seen as only part of their intervention throughout the political sphere.

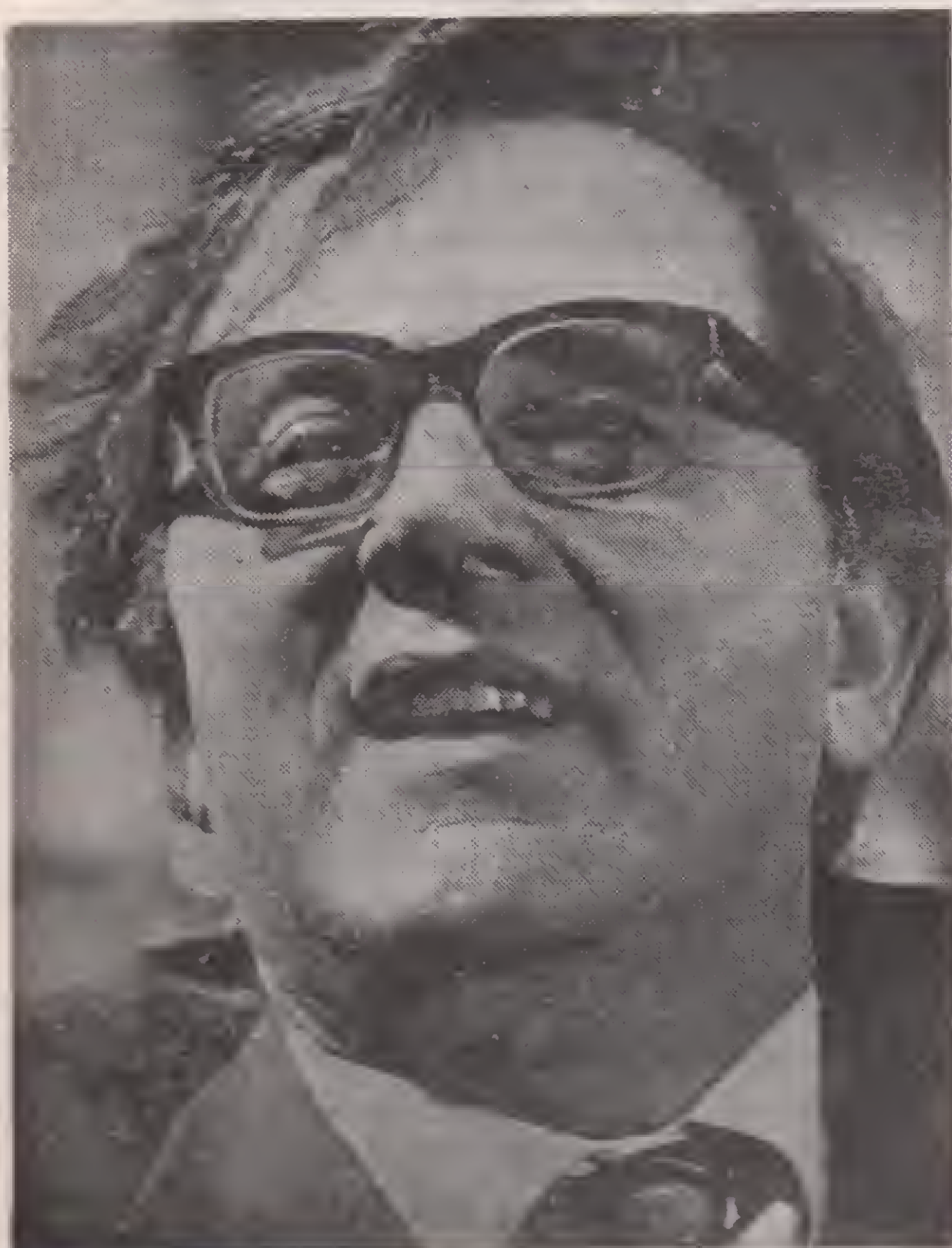
CIA or British Intelligence (or BOSS for that matter)? No difference. They work together so closely, in Britain and in the third world that they amount to the same thing: the agency for the implementation of American/NATO imperialist foreign policy by clandestine means.

Four major instances that are still going on are coming to light:

- the de-stabilisation of Jamaica;
- the case of the Polish double agents;
- the intervention in British politics of the National Association for Freedom, and, of course;
- the deportations themselves.

Panel

It became clear during the hearing of the absurd 'independent' panel into the Agee case that the ex-CIA



Merlyn Rees... I spy with my little eye.

agent's intervention in Jamaica was a primary reason for his deportation.

It is true that the only indication was that the three retired bureaucrats on the panel showed marginally more liveliness than usual when the subject was raised, and actually wrote down notes.

Of course, the details of the precise accusations against the two

are being withheld from them.

If, as has generally been believed, the disruption of democratic government in Jamaica, which involved the deaths of hundreds of people, was the work of the CIA, then clearly it must have been pressure from that agency, working through MI6, that jerked Rees into action.

But there are now doubts as to whether this was the case. American and British sources are hinting that the Manley de-stabilisation was a British job.

Impossible to prove, of course, since British intelligence is still a

caught and got 25 years.

Others had to be lifted out of Poland as the net tightened.

In addition there have been the totally unsubstantiated smears that two British agents were killed.

This last allegation was reported to have been put by Merlyn Rees to Liberal leader David Steel.

At no time has it been explained who the two men might have been, or where they were working.

It can only be assumed by Agee that they were two of the Poles.

It is a confusing affair, but the significance is clear: the original leaks came to a New York magazine from an acknowledged CIA source.

Originally the CIA said the spies were working for the French: after the deportation threat that changed to the British!

There is no substance at all to any suggestion that Agee had anything to do with the exposure, whoever they were.

Neither he nor anyone who he has worked with have ever exposed the identity of any western agents in Poland.

But the western intelligence network has been able to invent allegations that he has, and, more

Naturally, therefore, the legal records of the case, and above all the actual charge-sheets, were inaccessible to the accused and his counsel, consequently one did not know in general, or at least did not know with any precision, what charges to meet in the first plea; accordingly it could be only by pure chance that it contained really relevant matter.

A report of the Agee hearing? No, it's taken from Kafka's classic novel The Trial, in which the accused never knows the charges and never sees the judge.

sight more sophisticated than its American protege and its agents are not publicly identifiable as diplomatic staff operating under cover.

But the pattern would be the same as that of Guyana in 1967. It has been proved that toppling Jagan was a joint operation.

Dirty tricks

The dirty business of the breaking of the Polish spy ring is another CIA-MI6 job.

One of the smears loaded on Agee is that his 'revelations' led to the uncovering of a ring that has at various times been said to have been working for CIA, Britain and France.

One member, the Olympic fencing Gold Medallist Jerzy Pavlovsky, was

importantly, to present them to the British Government as unchallengeable fact.



Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

Nuclear battle

NUCLEAR NIGHTMARES come thick in the news. The press has been full of confirmed stories of leakage from Windscale, in Cumbria, Britain's dustbin for atomic contamination from all over the world.

It may come as a surprise, but nuclear power stations have never claimed to be leakproof, they leak 'within acceptable limits'.

Windscale has seen a large protest meeting in 1976 organised by 'Friends of the Earth'. It has been built to process nuclear fuel rods and waste, but it doesn't get rid of the radioactive hazard, it's not a sewage-works.

Way back in the fifties, we now learn, there was one hell of an explosion in a Russian research reactor.

It was very effectively hushed up until recently, but the scale of damage it inflicted would seem to have made the bombing of Japan look like a picnic.

On Saturdays October 30th and November 13th there were two massive demonstrations at Broksdorf in West Germany. Here the Government is preparing proposing to build its nuclear reactor and got the opposition of virtually every section of the local population — from clergy to farmers, from environmentalists to leftists.

Placards

At the site on October 30th, they met a moat and barbed wire entanglements.



Demonstrators cross the moat.

Photo 'Liberation'

This is one reason for the secrecy of the proceedings: allegations of this kind cannot bear the light of day.

The National Association for Freedom's intervention in industrial politics is not just right-wing lunacy.

Its council includes several men with military intelligence backgrounds — Sir Robert Thompson, Sir Gerald Templar.

But more importantly, the organisation that provides it motive power, the Institute for the Study of Conflict, was not just set up by men who had worked for CIA fronts, with CIA money, but works very closely with British intelligence.

It is from the MI5/MI6 that the information for their reports and books comes, and they are also well

Police, dogs and tear gas were laid on to help keep them out.

Placards bridged the moat, carpets smothered the barbed wire. Farmers donated straw bales to help scale the defences.

The demonstrators pitched camp for the night. In the meantime the press and TV left, and the police seized the chance to attack. They switched off the floodlights, and went in swinging clubs and firing tear gas. Many demonstrators were injured and some needed to be hospitalised.

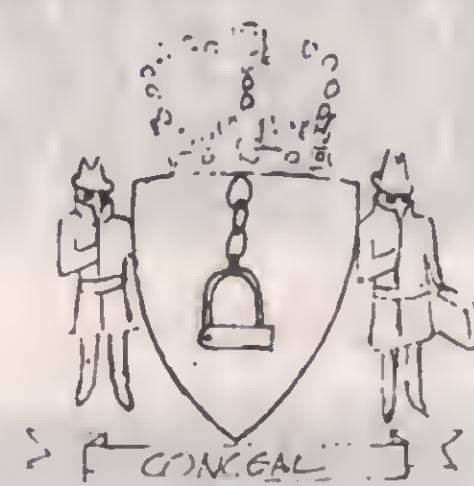
The next day the demonstration reassembled, but couldn't achieve the impact of the Saturday. Foil kites were flown to interfere with police VHF radio; some private aircraft used by the protestors were intercepted by army

REES TO BE DEPORTED?

IN ORDER to illustrate the absurdity of the Home Secretary's action, the Edinburgh Agee-Hosenball Defence has sent a mock 'Deportation Order' to Merlyn Rees.

The presentation of the 'deportation order' followed a piece of street theatre about the activities of the CIA.

They marked Philip Agee's appeal against deportation with a picket of New St Andrews House in Edinburgh, handing over letters from local trade unions and political groups condemning the decision of the Home Secretary to deport the journalists without detailing the charges against them or allowing them a fair trial.



Department of Public Non-Accountability

ORDER UNDER SECTION 12 OF THE ARBITRARY DEPORTATION OF UNDESIRABLES ACT 1972, AS AMENDED 1973/1975

Merlyn Rees, esq.

You are hereby instructed to leave the United Kingdom, of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, together with the Isle of Man, Channel Islands, Crown Colonies of Gibraltar and Hong Kong, and all other associated territories, forthwith. You must comply with this notice by midnight on the day that it is presented to you.

In order fully to comply with the arbitrary nature of this Act no reason for this Order will be given, nor will leave to appeal be granted.

Signed,

A. Blank

A. Blank, Undersecretary with responsibility for Erosion of Civil Liberties.

placed to indoctrinate the security services, through lectures at police and military colleges.

The upshot of all this is that the power of British intelligence agencies working closely with the CIA, to influence Government and politics, is increasing.

If Britain is due for a right-wing regime, a Thatcher Government, which is more than likely, their repression of the labour movement and the left will be orchestrated by these people.

These are the grounds on which the deportations must be fought.

In the meantime, the Agee/Hosenball Defence Committee is preparing to mobilise for the event of actual deportations.

All political and trade union groups are being put on the alert for big demonstrations all over the country.

Outside London, they are being asked to picket Immigration offices in big cities. Meetings are also being set up.

Details of the campaign can be got from the committee at 186 Kings Cross Road, London WC1X 9DE, phone 01-278 4575.

Also available are the series of briefings on the CIA that the committee is bringing out: four so far, on assassination plots against foreign leaders, the role of the CIA in Jamaica, and Key Intelligence Questions that the State Department instructs local stations to collect information about.

Two more out in February and March are on imperialism and immigration and the CIA in Britain

Wales army protest

OVER 600 residents in the small western Welsh town of Aberystwyth have signed a petition condemning the use of a nearby beauty spot as a training ground for the army.

The petition was organised by the Aberystwyth Anarchist Group and so great was the response that the local council rejected the army's application.

The army have claimed that their usage of the beauty spot—the site of an iron age hill fort—would not inconvenience the residents of a nearby working class estate, but at the same time they have admitted that flares and thunderflashes would be used.

Said petition organiser Lorraine Frost: 'People on this estate know only too well that any involvement with the army will mean a disruption of their leisure time and possible danger to children who play on the hill.'

The local council have thrown this back to the county council, but even if they uphold the decision, the game is not up by a long chalk.

A deep involvement in the fight of the 600 signatories is part of the increased activity of the revitalised libertarian group.

Other activities include showing of anarchist films, fund raising events and regular street sales of *Anarchist Worker*. MB

helicopters.

A fortnight later, seven times as many protestors turned out (over 35,000). As they besieged the sit, police attacked with gas grenades, helicopter support and little concern for how many they injured. Over 100 people were wounded.

Local villagers described the scene variously as "civil war" and "concentration camp".

The nuclear lobby, the previous week, could scrape together only 800 nuclear workers from all over Germany to gather for them.

At sea

The West German ship the Otto Hahn, with a leaking nuclear reactor was refused entry at the Port of London, but was

allowed to anchor at Southampton. This poisonous hulk was moored only a few miles from the populations of Southampton and Portsmouth!

All reactors increase the radioactive material in the world. Plutonium is produced in excess by some.

Don't be kidded by "half lives". This expression only means that half the radioactive waste breaks down in a half-life of, say, 35 years.

The other half doesn't go in 70 years. After another 35 years, a quarter is still left.

It's high time we started to wind up the nuclear disaster and research in ways of cleaning up the mess world-wide capitalism has caused.

J.T.

THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE

THE CATERING INDUSTRY has always been notorious for long hours, abysmal pay, lousy conditions and lack of union organisation among its workers.

Recently, however, a number of disputes have erupted throughout the country which show that catering workers are no longer prepared to accept their miserable lot.

At the Grosvenor Hotel in Sheffield, the Randolph Hotel in Oxford (both part of the Trust Houses Forte empire) and the Linton Lodge Hotel in Oxford workers are on strike for union recognition and proper contracts of employment in a fight to gain decent wages for decent hours with guaranteed overtime rates for antisocial hours.

In each case the reaction of management has been one of outright hostility; workers have been intimidated, victimised and sacked merely because they are exerting their right to belong to a trade union.

Anarchist Worker interviewed shop stewards at the Oxford hotels, and has a report from a former employee of Air Catering Services in Manchester which throws more light on the conditions catering workers have to put up with, and the underhand methods Trust Houses Fortes (THF) use against their workers.

AIR CATERING SERVICES is a Trust Houses Forte concern which operates in airports throughout the country, controlling in-flight and ground catering and the provision of duty-free goods.

At Manchester Airport, ACS Flight Catering runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, throughout the summer — employing over 80 people. In the winter this is scaled down to approximately 30.

Workers are divided into different sections, each with at least three different shifts and different breaks, thereby ensuring very little cohesion and unity in the workforce.

In the same area, THF run two hotels; conditions there and in ground catering are known to be worse than average in catering.

Flight catering is the only plant where the work force is unionised.

Sex discrimination is implicit in the division of labour and reflected in the wage differentials.

Women are employed in the repetitive, conveyor belt preparation of food, and men are employed for the more 'skilled' jobs — portering, checking, driving and so on.

Women, generally assistants, 61p an hour + cost of living. Men — between 66 and 72p an hour. Commis chefs, 51p/hr Overtime: time and a half for Sat, Sun,

Discrimination in

and over 40hrs; time & a fifth for night work.

One man employed to do the lifting involved in the food preparation section was told he was being employed to do a 'woman's job'.

A woman already employed as a Gen. Assistant applied for a driving vacancy and the job mysteriously disappeared.

There were different union subscription rates for men and women — even men

employed on the lowest wage level were required to pay the higher subscription.

A shop steward was questioned about the obvious discrimination and replied that "you couldn't expect a man to cut sandwiches for that money." — The emphasis on the role-playing as on the low wages.

Seasonal

Anyone employed after April was employed on a seasonal contract expiring on Oct 31. Many of these seasonal

workers were students.

The management, however, deliberately encouraged divisions and antagonism between permanent and seasonal workers, young and old, taxed and non-taxed, men and women.

Many students were there to make a fast, tax-free buck and were justifiably criticised for showing no interest in work working conditions or in their fellow workers.

The short term contract system is extensively used by THF as an easy way of getting rid of trouble makers.

Many people over retiring age were also employed as the chances of them getting another job if sacked are minimal.

THF has always actively discouraged unionisation, their job made easier by a predominantly female workforce, a high labour turnover and a reliance on seasonal workers.

At Manchester Airport the Union was only recognised after a 2½ day strike and conditions have since improved compared to other THF branches in the area.

The Union, T&GWU, made no attempt to organise seasonal workers, showed surprise when groups of us asked to join and were unable to provide us with copies of the union constitution.

Later in the summer, seeing as all the full-time workers and a substantial number of seasonal workers at that time were Union members, it was ridiculous at there was active discouragement of participation on a shop-floor level and a complete lack of initiative towards any action.

Many workers expressed disillusionment with the Union because of past sell-outs.

The General Manager, Stewart, had learnt to deal with the union by having permanent token negotiations, which were sufficient to placate opposition, especially in the light of many other pressures.

The union had been 'negotiating' for a badly needed sick room and paid nurse for over a year.

Blacklist

Stewart had often boasted about a blacklist and threatened an individual that he would ensure that they would

Victimisation in Oxford

THE DEVELOPMENT of the disputes at the hotels in Oxford followed a pattern which is becoming typical of small service enterprises with no established union and anti-union management.

In the Linton Lodge two waiters were dismissed on November 17 after joining the T&GWU.

14 of the 22 workers at the hotel came out in their support and were sacked.

They were sent letters by the manager which blandly say "the reason for your dismissal being that you are now taking part in this strike".

The strikers set about picketing the hotel and the T&GWU made the strike official on Monday 22 November.

At the Randolph — Oxford's only 4 star hotel — chambermaids who have been joining the T&GWU since September attended a union meeting in working time on that Monday, despite management's threats of the sack if they did so.

On Friday the management picked on four of the chambermaids and said they would be thrown out unless they were prepared to start working weekends.

As they had children they could not do this and were given notice. On the following Monday the rest of the union came out on strike. This was swiftly made official and a picket established.

The pickets have been harassed by both management and police. To date six pickets have been arrested at the Linton Lodge and one at the Randolph on a variety of charges ranging from abusive language ("scab"?), to "criminal damage to a pair of spectacles".

But despite this and the atrocious weather the pickets are still holding out. They need every bit of support they can get to counter the management's intransigence (strengthened it seems by the National Association For Freedom) to make up for the shortcomings of the T&G bureaucrats' backing.

Anarchist Worker talks to Margaret Radbourne, T&GWU 5/670 shop steward at the Randolph.

What were conditions like at the hotel?

Before we joined the union conditions weren't very good at all. When I first went there there were no such things as dusters or cleaning materials; we had to use towels and pillowcases or bring our own from home.

After we joined the union we had less rooms each to do so we could keep them reasonably clean. We also got a new house-keeper who got us cleaning materials which made it easier.

What support have you had from the T&GWU during the strike?

Not as much as we'd hoped for. I don't think the officials have done as much as they could have considering one of them said he 'declared bloody war' on the catering industry.

Where has your support come from?

We've had a lot of support from the town, from the motor works and from students. They've done a good job on the picket line, a good few customers have been only too anxious to go elsewhere and the pickets have supplied information on other hotels available.

People have come to support us off their own bat because they've heard of the strike or been contacted; no-one has been officially called out yet.

What reaction have you had from inside the hotel?

There has been a lot of abusive language from those still working, more than from our side, I think, despite what you read in the papers.



Those inside are just there to take advantage of what we'll have won when we go back.

What comes next?

We are prepared to go on to the end. We want to keep in contact with other hotels on strike and particularly to get other THF places out. Someone from Club One in Coventry came to see us while they were on strike.

The staff in the management canteen at British Leyland, which is run by THF came out for a day but we'll have to make more contact with workers ourselves, we can't rely on T&G channels

We also interviewed Joseph Tosti, the shop steward at the Linton Lodge.

Why did you think of joining a union?

We applied for a contract of employment and we thought it would give us more strength in asking for better working conditions.

Why were you sacked?

It's illegal to say that it was for joining a

union; they said it was because we hadn't settled after five months and our work was unsatisfactory. But he also said he would give us references; the one contradicts the other.

He refused to recognise the union, didn't he, when the staff tried to defend themselves against the sackings?

The letter of recognition from our union official arrived in the morning; in the evening we were sacked.

The manager has refused to meet our union official unless his solicitor is present.

How has the T&G helped you?

Mainly financially; they declared the strike official in four days which is something of a record.

After that it was just a lot of words, nothing very promising for the future either. *Do you still think you were right in joining the union?*

Yes, unions are a good thing providing you change the officials. People have come to support us because they support trade unions. Most have come through the Oxford Student Trade

Union Liaison Committee and Ruskin College.

How effective has the picket been?

We've had a very good response from suppliers; the first day we stopped nearly every delivery. We've turned away some customers but that's a bit harder.

The hotel lost £4,000 before Christmas; it must be a lot more than that now.

How is the management reacting?

They are very aggressive, beat a picket up, pushed a car right down the road into a fence with the help of a few of the strong arms they have at the hotel.

We know for sure that the National Association For Freedom is supporting the management. Their paper had all the details of the strike on the front page and they helped the management in the High Court over the evictions.

What happened in the eviction?

On the 6 December the staff living in hotel lodgings were served with a summons to appear in court 4 days later

T&G vs THF

T&G branches involved in the strikes have adopted policies for organising picketing, publicity, the defence of arrested pickets, and the calling of a demonstration in Oxford.

These motions were passed at an emergency Trades Council meeting.

The strikers' branch, the T&GWU 5/670 has also called for organisation of national blacking of THF and sympathy action, but the officials have been slow to implement this.

They say there isn't enough local support to base national action on.

Dozens of local union branches includ-

ing most of the major T&G branches have passed motions of support, donated money and, refused to cross the picket line and stood on it.

It isn't surprising they drag their feet. Some are sincerely convinced that the present course of the country and opposition to militancy are in the workers' best interests; others simply are concerned for their own jobs (which might carry less weight if workers developed more confidence in their own fighting and organising abilities).

But isolated as they are from the everyday areas of struggle, full-time officials are unlikely to be converted to activism in the way that a rank and file member is through daily experience.

National action needs to be publicised and coordinated by the T&G, but any

members reading this, or anyone who has anything to do with THF can get a motion of support for the strikes raised, black local THF concerns and inform Oxford T&G of their willingness after discussing the question of sympathy action.

Unionise

This struggle is important not only for the THF and hotel employees, but for all fighting for union recognition and needing to develop ways of spreading action despite non-cooperation from TU leaderships.

It will also benefit other employees — eg in catering in local government, who may already be unionised, and receive wages 'better than average' for their industry, but which are still dismally low

because hotel wages are so abysmal.

This shows the importance of welcoming women and immigrants into the TU movement; the prejudice against them at work has only comparatively recently and patchily been overcome enough to allow them to become involved in such fights.

Their previous isolation, as well as allowing them to suffer bad conditions meant they could be used to undercut or scab on union labour.

For more information, contact Mr J.Tosti, 127 Botley Road, Oxford. DONATIONS are essential to help with the continuation of the strike and the defence of the arrested pickets

Please pass motions for donations or take collections and send money to the T&GWU 5/670 strike fund c/o the above address.

never get employment with THF anywhere again, after this worker had taken part in strike action.

THF have a nationwide network of files on all their employees, which appears to be extensively used to prevent re-employment of trouble makers.

Management is not so honest [stupid] usually as to admit this, but Stewart took pride in showing his antagonism towards the workers.

He made various comments displaying his political opinion, including, "Things would be different when my party, the crossed 'Z's party, got in".

His superior was constantly employed in trying to keep him in check, especially after the Flight Catering Duty Managers had themselves threatened to take strike action.

In the past a Duty manager had

Stewart on increased staff levels.

They were ordered to return to work and refused.

A shop steward was then ordered to take her section to work on their belt, which she did.

The workers were advised to return by other stewards and go slow.

Meanwhile, Stewart commented that seven people were necessary to run a belt.

The four then insisted on this figure for the rest of the day, refusing to work with people employed in other categories.

Management were used to keep up the complement of workers, and when they refused to help clear up at the end of the day, the four refused to do so alone.

Three of them were sacked, threatened

with being locked out by the police, and accused of being political trouble makers.

As it happened, there was a union branch meeting that night which made the dispute official and called a strike for the next day.

Demands

We demanded the reinstatement of the sacked workers, a guarantee of continued employment for a worker who was told he was to be made redundant in October, and an increase in staffing levels.

The strike was 100%. However, only the re-instatement of the sacked 3 workers was agreed before the union recommended a return to work.

A meeting between Stewart, the Shop Stewards and a full time T&GWU worker was arranged but delayed for over a week.

Staff levels were barely increased. The redundancy was only resolved by workers acting on their own initiative and threatening further industrial action, until a commitment was given.

This worker was moved to a different shift, a frequently employed method of breaking unity in the work-force.

One of the original workers left because of intimidating pressure from her supervisor.

Isolation

It must be pointed out that the union officials working in isolation, as they chose to, were also subject to victimisation and other more subtle pressures.

New shop stewards seemed to suffer from the union's complacent and disorganised state.

Neither of the two remaining workers were re-employed when their contracts expired.

One of them was accidentally given her discharge form with her last wages.

The crossed out letters suggest that the original intention was to write 'communist'.

A second form was seen which stated that the worker was persistently late, and slow in his work and would not be re-employed.

He complained and Stewart changed the form. Other workers were told no such forms existed.

This kind of blacklisting is a mere extension of the grating, classifying and branding which pervades our existence from school onwards.

Luddism

Many airport workers seemed to feel that their only means of challenging their working conditions was through sabotage.

The union, we were repeatedly told, would get us nowhere, their constant negotiations being unsuccessful and demoralising.

Management structure was designed to exploit all possible divisions between workers.

With this blatant pernicious exploitation of labour, it is not surprising that THF has a reputation for being one of the most successful companies in the catering industry.

FULL HOUSE FOR BINGO STRIKERS

WORKERS involved in struggles for trade union recognition can take heart from the victory won recently by the 70 women employed in Club One and the Rialto, two Coventry bingo clubs which are part of a chain of businesses controlled by Orr Enterprises.

The women, who before the strike were being paid a miserly 56½p an hour, were fighting for the right to belong to the TGWU — the management was only prepared to recognise the National Assn of Theatre & Kinematographic Employees (NATKE) whose normal wage rates were below what the management were paying.

They came out on strike on Oct 22/23 and kept a picket going for 11 weeks.

Delivery drivers stopped delivering beer, milk and bread, and the dustmen stopped emptying the bins.

Many customers refused to cross the picket line even though the clubs were run by scab labour (including a NATKE official!).

The majority of the women had never been involved in a strike before.

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Manchester

joined the union and been pressured into leaving.

Searches

Stewart collaborated closely with the airport police, and authorised searches of workers as they left work.

Under the contract, THF had the right to search an employee's home as well, which they did.

Flight catering created a tremendous wastage; fantastic overpackaging — plastic everything in plastic bags — all thrown away, and workers were rarely allowed to take food home.

Obviously there was a considerable lot of theft going on, at all levels, and many workers were sabotaging meals and equipment as far as was possible;

The company relies on natural wastage of seasonal staff in September before contracts are terminated in October.

For about a fortnight, the work-load remains the same when many workers have left.

This summer, at the beginning of September, the airport drivers complained at the low staff levels in Flight Catering which affected their work.

Stewart stalled, promising negotiations. When pressured he claimed to have put adverts in the papers which had been 'accidentally omitted'.

One morning, four seasonal workers in one section refused to continue work without a firm commitment from

Trust Houses Forte Ltd. LEAVERS - DISCHARGE FORM No. H.P.

LOCATION AND IDENTIFICATION DETAILS

Division Name TRUST HOUSES FORTÉ AIRPORT SERVICES LTD.

Group Name AIRPORT CATERING SERVICES LTD.

Branch Name MANCHESTER FLIGHT CATERING

Employees Name

The above named - has Resigned - ☒ - with Notice - ☒ - without Notice - ☐

On Sat. 25.9.1976. (Day and Date)

Last Working Day Will be before Sunday 3.10.1976. (Day and Date)

Reason for Leaving (DO NOT WRITE) RETURNING TO COLLEGE (Day and Date)

* ENTER A CODE REFERRING TO THIS LIST

CODE 1 Dishonesty CODE 2 Bad timekeeping CODE 3 Insubordination or Rudeness CODE 4 Inefficiency CODE 5 Medical grounds CODE 6 Dislikes the work CODE 7 Wants more money or shorter hours CODE 8 Moving or Giving up work CODE 9 Other reasons

ADDRESS TO WHICH ANY CASH OR DOCUMENTS MAY BE SENT.

REMARKS A B&B RADICAL.

WAGES DEPT. USE

Cleared By EXP. 3. 217. DATE 25.9.1976

Manager's Signature

So what's all the fuss?

THE POEM published below was first published in *Gay News* No 96, June 1976, and is republished here without permission from author or publisher

It is now the subject of a Criminal Blasphemy action brought by the notorious Mary Whitehouse, and is printed here in support of *Gay News*, opposing the backward ideology behind the pending prosecution.

'Blasphemy is not the central issue; religion is rapidly becoming irrelevant even to the ruling class, except when (as now) it is an excuse for imposing a form of morality that used to suit them.

It is unlikely that a poem about Jesus being chopped up into little pieces by a chain saw and fed to a giant shark would have raised more than an eyebrow.

Homosexuality, however, or any form of sexual or non sexual behaviour which cannot easily fit into the nuclear family, and represents a challenge to conventional competitive consumer society is rightly regarded as subversive.

Sexual attraction between men and women has been used in conditioning their expectations — marriage, settling down to a secure job, starting a family, acquiring responsibilities, not making trouble, and becoming isolated from those outside the family.

It is used to sell commodities, and to bolster up the oppression of women and the consequent weakening and division of the labour force and the community.

The domination of women by men is part and parcel of the authoritarian and hierarchical organisation of society.

Distrust and fear of anything new or different — sexuality, colour, different tastes in food even — is all too common, but it is up to every libertarian socialist, every class-conscious worker, to point out that homosexuality is no more of a threat to the working class than flying saucers.

When one worker calls another a 'poof' its the boss who wins because a divided working class is a beaten one! Editorial Collective

to tell him of my long devotion, my desire, my dread —
 Something we had never talked about.
 My spear, wet with blood,
 his dear, broken body, all open wounds,
 and in each wound — his side, his back,
 his mouth — I came and came and came

As if each coming was my last.
 And then the miracle possessed us.
 I felt him enter into me, and fiercely spend
 his spirit's final seed within my hole, my sole,
 pulse upon pulse, unto the ends of earth —
 he crucified me with him into kingdom come.

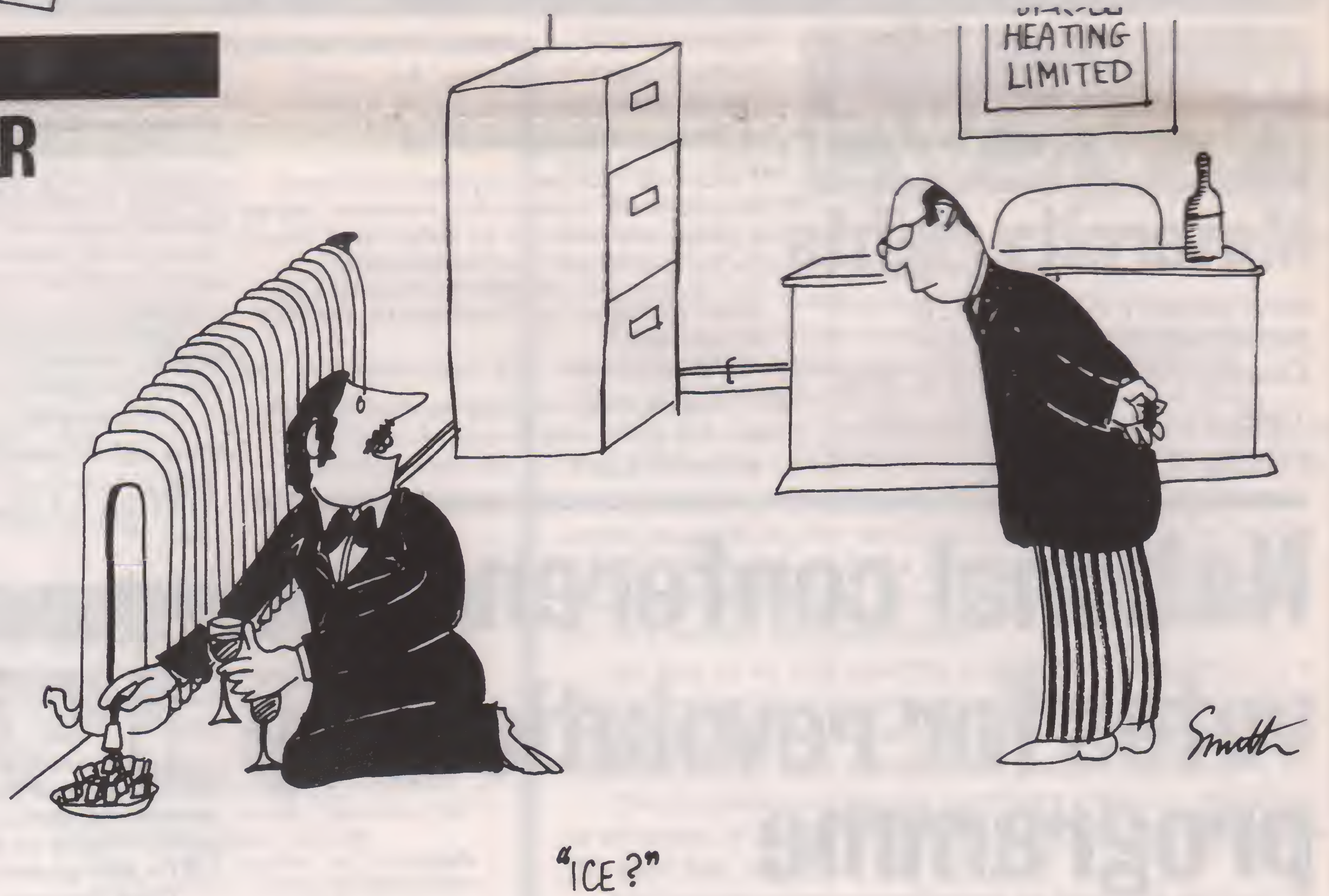
— This is the passionate and blissful
 crucifixion
 same-sex lovers suffer, patiently and gladly.
 They inflict these loving injuries of joy
 and grace
 one upon the other, till they die of lust
 and pain
 within the horny paradise of one another's
 limbs,
 with one voice cry to heaven in a last
 divine release.

Then lie long together, peacefully entwined
 entwined, with hope
 of resurrection, as we did, on that green
 hill far away.
 But before we rose again, they came and
 took him away from me.
 They knew what we had done, but felt
 no shame or anger. Rather they were glad
 for us,
 and blessed us, as would he, who loved all
 men.

And after three long, lonely days, like years,
 in which I roamed the gardens of my grief
 seeking for him, my one friend who had
 gone from me,
 he rose from sleep, at dawn, and showed
 himself to me before
 all others. And took me to him with
 the love that now forever dares to speak
 its name.

HOT UNDER THE COLLAR

SHOPFLOOR workers walked out today at Gibbons Brothers, Lenches Bridge, Brierley Hill, because their factory was too cold. The 150 workers walked into the canteen which, together with the office block, one of the workers said was "Nicely warm." The firm, which makes heating systems for factories, declined to comment. Wolverhampton Express & Star December 29 1976



The love that dares to speak its name

By James Kirkup

As they took him from the cross
 I, the centurion, took him in my arms —
 the tough lean body
 of a man no longer young,
 beardless, breathless,
 but well hung.

He was still warm.
 While they prepared the tomb
 I kept guard over him.
 His mother and the Magdalen
 had gone to fetch clean linen
 to shroud his nakedness.

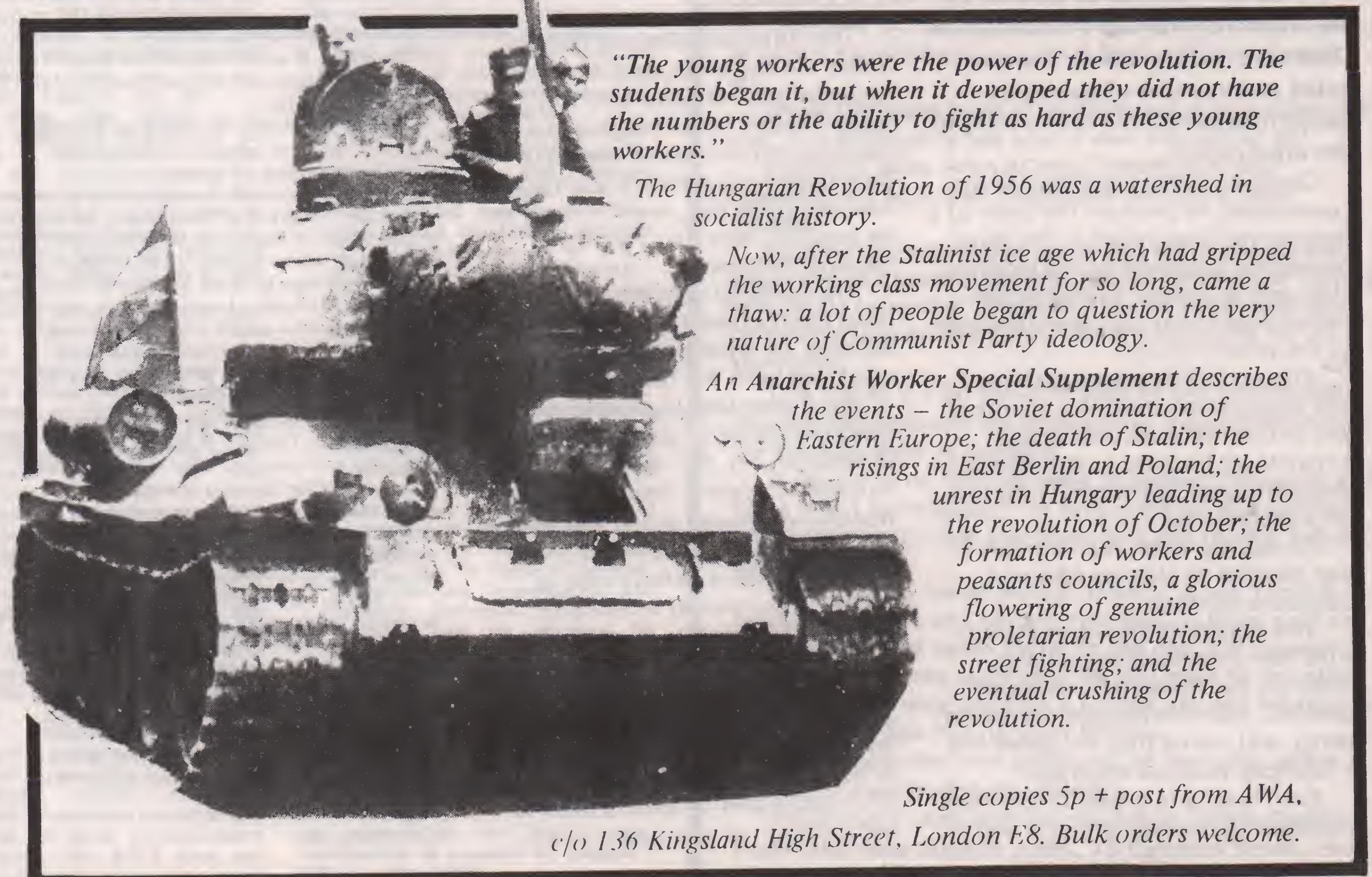
I was alone with him.
 For the last time
 I kissed his mouth. My tongue
 found his, bitter with death.
 I licked his wounds —
 the blood was harsh.

For the last time
 I laid my lips around the tip
 of that great cock, the instrument
 of our salvation, our eternal joy.
 The shaft still throbbed, anointed
 with death's final ejaculation.

I knew he'd had it off with other men —
 with Herod's guards, with Pontius Pilate,
 with John the Baptist, with Paul of Tarsus,
 with foxy Judas, a great kisser,
 with the rest of the Twelve, together and apart.
 He loved all men, body, soul and spirit —
 even me.

So now I took off my uniform, and, naked,
 lay together with him in his desolation,
 caressing every shadow of his cooling flesh,
 hugging him and trying to warm him back
 to life.

Slowly the fire in his thighs went out,
 while I grew hotter with unearthy love.
 It was the only way I knew to speak our
 love's proud name,



"The young workers were the power of the revolution. The students began it, but when it developed they did not have the numbers or the ability to fight as hard as these young workers."

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 was a watershed in socialist history.

Now, after the Stalinist ice age which had gripped the working class movement for so long, came a thaw: a lot of people began to question the very nature of Communist Party ideology.

An Anarchist Worker Special Supplement describes the events — the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe; the death of Stalin; the risings in East Berlin and Poland; the unrest in Hungary leading up to the revolution of October; the formation of workers and peasants councils, a glorious flowering of genuine proletarian revolution; the street fighting; and the eventual crushing of the revolution.

Single copies 5p + post from AWA,

c/o 136 Kingsland High Street, London E8. Bulk orders welcome.

THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

EVERYWHERE in the world the working class climbs onto its feet and comes into battle against the bosses and bureaucrats, who are putting up prices and cutting services in attempts to pull themselves out of the slump.

In Egypt workers protested against price rises on essentials such as sugar, rice and bottled gas (for cooking) of between 12 and 45 per cent.

This was coupled with the run-down of public transport and widespread dissatisfaction with the way the Sadat regime has handled the Palestinian question.

Sadat has called in western industrialists and U.S. influence to help him out of his economic difficulties and his large international debt. Consequently, he had to opt out of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and let Kissinger come in to 'mediate'.

Attempting to control the crisis and in line with US capitalist interests, Sadat is making sure left-wingers are thrown out of teaching jobs and that student unions become more and more under the control of the government.

Riots

This resulted in riots all over Egypt, in the universities, and in Cairo pitched battles took place with the police: 120 buses were burnt.

In Bayla, several public buildings including the courts and the railway station were burnt; over 80 people were killed and 800 wounded.

Sadat was forced to revoke the

price increases and give an all-round wage rise of ten per cent.

This has not been enough to put off further militancy and mass arrests have taken place.

In Sri Lanka, railway workers struck for an increase in the Christmas pay advance, 20,000 coming out.

The strike soon became a massive action against cuts in public expenditure involving other sections of the working class including bus workers, water workers, firemen and postal workers.

Mrs Bandaranaike called in the army to run the railways and the railwaymen replied by ripping up whole lines, sabotaging the signals, as well as sitdowns on the lines.

All strikes were declared illegal: the workers replied with a general strike.

The government has put censorship on the press, and has already arrested — as far as we know — 84 strikers.

The workers risk being sold out by the union leaders and a possible state of emergency may be declared. However these actions show a remarkable recovery from 1971 when 4,000 revolutionaries were murdered by the government forces.

In China too, the struggle against the bureaucracy continues.

Government agencies have issued reports of demonstrations in support of Hua Kuo-feng, but other reports, although heavily censored, indicate that the large province of Szechwan was the scene of fierce fighting.

Disturbances in Paoting, 100 miles south of Peking had to be put down by the Army.

In Kiangsi, it appears many strikes broke out.

This follows on from Hua's speech attacking the 'radical' faction of the bureaucracy, and calling for greater



Pro-Hua demonstration in Shanghai

photo: Liberation

EVICTION- Cologne style

COLOGNE—Demolition firm *Malta* used police support and thugs to evict people from a house in Aachener Strasse in September last year.

West German anarchist newspaper *Befreiung* reported that five residents fled onto the roof and resisted police attempts to pull them off with mountaineering gear. Crowds of passers-by and local residents soon gathered and prevented further violence, apart from an aborted ploy to get them off using vicious alsatian dogs.

Late evening saw the demolition firm's thugs do the dirty work: they tore off the roof from beneath the occupiers' arses.

Now the building once more stands empty and gutted. 'Once more' because that's how it had been until militants of

output and the revival of pay differentials.

This means that the workers and peasants would have to work harder, while the bureaucrats positions were maintained and strengthened.

There is resistance to this from some people, and despite what Hua would like the West to think, life for him is not all a bed of roses.

E.L.

SSK, Cologne Socialist Self-help group, cleared out, reglazed and even partially renovated the house.

This work, done with help from Tech' college students, was to accommodate old people, young people and nurseries.

Like cities in the UK, it seems that houses are left to rot in Germany too while working people search long and hard for good accommodation at reasonable prices.

Of course only the owners of houses that are sold or rented benefit from the 'shortage' of houses and the protection of the law.

It's the same the whole world over.

If you have any information or experience of similar activities, SSK would like to hear from you. They're at: SSK, Saliering 41, 5 Köln 1, West Germany.

Reviews Maternity rights

MATERNITY RIGHTS FOR WORKING WOMEN by Jean Cousins, published by NCCL, 30p.

THIS recently published booklet explains in detail what are a woman's

rights concerning maternity under the Employment Protection Act, which comes into effect on June 1 1976.

They can be summarised as:

- 1 Dismissal from employment on grounds of pregnancy is now unfair dismissal, and so a woman can apply to an Industrial Tribunal for reinstatement or compensation.
- 2 A woman has the right to be reinstated in her job for up to 29 weeks after the birth of her baby.
- 3 The entitlement to 6 weeks maternity pay

Rights under the Employment Protection Act apply only to women who have worked *full time* for the same employer

for at least two years before the 11th week prior to the birth.

Benefits under the National Insurance scheme are qualified by so many conditions about contributions, class of stamp paid, 'reasonable earnings' when claiming the earnings related supplement that many women are *not* eligible for the Maternity Grant or the Maternity Allowance, or else would not benefit from the earnings related supplement.

Some of the shortcomings of these provisions can be clearly seen in comparison with those of other European countries. For example:

ITALY — 20 weeks leave on 80% of basic wage.
AUSTRIA — 1 year maternity leave at full pay.

FRANCE — 14 weeks leave at 90% of basic wage.
SWEDEN AND DENMARK — in addition to better provisions for paid maternity leave, also have provision for paternity leave.

It is worthwhile noting that some unions have formulated model maternity rights agreements, some including a much longer period of leave on full pay, and some pressing for paid paternity leave.

These have not necessarily been implemented everywhere there is a branch of that particular union — they are merely recommended negotiating terms.

So check if your trade union has a model maternity rights agreement, and if it is implemented.

Maternity Rights for Working Women is a clear guide to what is an extremely complicated piece of legislation.

To aid those women attempting to claim their rights, there is a Time Chart, which shows when to claim the benefits, when they cease, when to notify the employer of the intention to leave or resume work.

There is a table of entitlements, which mostly shows in which circumstances a woman has *no* maternity rights or can claim unfair dismissal, which is a very lengthy, discouraging procedure!

This book is much more than a guide to legislation, though. It shows how the two year rule still discriminates against women — women often have to change their job when their husband moves.

Often they find it hard to secure continuous employment where there are no nurseries or after-school play facilities.

It shows how the right to reinstatement is useless when there are so few nursery places, and most nurseries won't take babies under a year anyway.

I would recommend this booklet to be read by anyone who is a member of a trade union, men as well as women, and anyone who is, or might at some future date be a parent — which includes practically all of us!

Sharon Hayden

Gramsci's Marxism

THIS BOOK is an interpretation of Gramsci rather than the real thing but attempts to deal with Gramsci's writings in a systematic fashion — unlike the disparate structure of Gramsci's own output.

The chapter headings are 'Ideology', 'Philosophy', 'Factory Councils', 'Mass Consciousness', and 'The Revolutionary Party'.

Gramsci attacked the economism and determinism of his Marxist contemporaries — he emphasised the subjective side of Marxism, the ideological and cultural aspects of revolution, that it must be total.

Gramsci believed that the "people are not moved by theories derived from statistical laws . . . but according to their active and conscious co-participation". This forms the basis of Gramsci's appeal to anarchists.

However, he states that "each individual is the synthesis not only of existing relations but of the history of the relations".

While this is true, it ignores the creative side of the individual and the masses, putting down to *history* the origin of any new ideas. This is perhaps what defines Gramsci as a Marxist.

Gramsci attacked elitism both in philosophy and organisation. "For a mass of people to be led to think coherently and in the same coherent fashion about the present world is a 'philosophical' event far more important and original than the discovery by some philosophical 'genius' of a truth which remains the property of a small group of intellectuals".

Here he is referring to the scientific Marxists.

There is a conflict within Gramsci, however, between the relative importance of ideological-cultural struggle by the masses and the struggle of the revolutionary party.

Party

"Gramsci argued", says Boggs, "that the masses must become in the long run the bearer of revolutionary change."

It is they, rather than an organised party leadership, who must create socialism — otherwise political struggle only serves to reproduce the hierarchical social and authority relations of bourgeois society".

But in *Letters from Prison*, p 160 Gramsci writes "true revolutionaries and

Theatre

THE NURSERY PLAY by Counter-act is a really excellent piece of committed political theatre.

It deals with the effect of the cuts on a group of women: one a working mother with a child at a day nursery, and the others workers at the nursery itself.

The cuts mean that the mother loses her place at the nursery and so may have to give up her job.

They also mean long hours for the workers at the nursery and inadequate facilities there for the kids.

The play finishes optimistically, with the prospect of united working class action against the cuts.

However, it is difficult to do justice to the considerable political content of the play.

It shows, amongst other things, the sexism and lack of concern of the union bureaucracy for women members, how it is the state which creates 'problem families', how and why women workers are the most exploited part of the labour force, and much, much, more.

This may sound as if it is theoretical or boring, but that is not the case.

The cast perform in a naturalistic style, without any very sophisticated effects and so manage not to distance themselves from their audience.

Indeed, there are some very amusing moments. I particularly liked the time when two actors, one representing Capital and one the State did a delicate dance together, singing "you for me and me for you".

It is a very entertaining play with a lot of political ideas and information in it. See it if you get the chance.

COUNTER ACT is a group of socialist media workers who perform, and also offer practical workshops in various forms of media (video, silk-screenprinting, street agit-prop theatre and film).

Their plays include the *Nursery Play*, *Short Shift* or *Double Shift* and the *Cuts Show*, and they aim to spark off discussion among parents, nursery workers, trades unionists, students and others campaigning against the cuts and for good quality childcare.

CounterAct's *The Cuts Show* is available as an LP: 60 minutes of songs written by Counter Act. Costs £2 an LP + 10p postage per LP (cheques and p.o.s made out to Counter Act, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R 0AT. All profits to Counter Act's future work.

CounterAct: 01-267 5059.

"Short Shift on the Double Shift"

10th Feb Coventry — Warwick University Students' Union. (Evening).

12th Feb Bristol — University Students' Union at 2pm (as part of the National Conference of Student Community Action).

There may be other bookings in London and elsewhere: contact 01-251 4977 (day) or 01-267 5059 (eve.) for details.

Anyone interested in booking Short Shift or The Cuts Show — contact on above phone nos. — Short Shift is touring March 14th for one week, April 12th for four weeks.

the creation of a revolutionary party require more than the mere possession of a revolutionary truth. Such a truth must be capable of inspiring large popular action. Only when they [the anarchists] have realised that absolute truth is not enough to move the masses to action . . . but that a specific truth is necessary will there be success".

Councils

He recognised the abilities of the workers, but saw a dialectic between the institutionalisation of these abilities in factory councils and the revolutionary party rooted in the masses.

Despite being in Russia for much of 1922-3, Gramsci remained an admirer of the Leninist course of the Russian Revolution.

Boggs puts down the errors mainly to the "Stalinist deformation of Soviet politics" — yet this is *after* the crushing of the last soviet democracy at Kronstadt and the fact that the first concentration camps and mass terror were instituted by Lenin in August 1918.

While this book is worth reading, despite its academic nature, it is likely that Gramsci's libertarianism may only be a rationale for the existence of the neo-Bolsheviks.

Ron Clerk

National conference votes for revolutionary programme

AT THE last national conference of the Anarchist Workers Association in December, held in Leeds, members voted on a number of questions concerning policy and the running of the organisation.

Conference elected a five person commission to produce the draft of a programme responding to the most immediate problems of the working class and proposing collective and independent working class situations to the present crisis.

This commission would review any documents sent in by members and within three months would circulate its findings to the membership who would collectively decide on a programme.

As regards *Anarchist Worker*, it was decided to elect an editorial collective of three.

This collective would be responsible for commissioning articles, ensuring that important issues are covered, coordinating the correspondents, and seeing that the paper has a balanced political coverage.

Each local group would nominate members to develop contacts and

journalistic skills.

The editorial collective remains under the complete control of the organisation, and is subject to instant recall, the delegate and national conferences of the AWA have powers of mandate and recall over the collective, and there are to be elections every six months at national conference.

The editorial collective will report every month to our internal bulletin, on what had been edited, what had been left out and why.

AWA members also voted to set up commissions in different fields of struggle, e.g. the women's movement/sexism; creches, childcare, housework, trade unions; students; anti-fascism; unemployed work.

This would hopefully lead to greater effectiveness and coordination in these fields.

The Anarchist Workers Association hopes to increase its activity and influence over the next few years, and to assist more fully in the struggle for self management of struggles and of society, and for the abolition of the wages system.

letters

Aberystwyth

Dear Comrades,

Aberystwyth Anarchist Group is easily the largest group in Wales and to our knowledge this is the only town in Wales which has a substantial group of anarchists who meet regularly as anarchists.

A small group exists in Swansea, otherwise anarchists in Wales are active only on an individual basis, though in some places, particularly Cardiff, the number of libertarian socialists active in various fields is considerable.

In recent months the anarchist group has been particularly active in extending the effort to save Noel and Marie Murray to Wales.

Apart from Aberystwyth itself, the campaign has been extended to all the large Welsh towns, either by comrades from Aberystwyth itself or by anarchists and libertarian socialists in towns who have distributed leaflets produced by the Aberystwyth group.

Through these activities the group has also become involved in the Welsh Prisoners Defense Committee which is becoming

active in the defence of political prisoners in Wales.

An anarchist presence in Aberystwyth is now firmly established and copies of *Anarchist Worker* have become steadily easier to sell in the town.

In Wales as a whole, however, the anarchist movement is scattered and ineffective, with virtually no regular contact between individual comrades or groups.

To overcome this weakness, efforts to establish a Federation of Welsh Anarchists have been underway for some time and are approaching fruition.

A national conference will probably be held early in the new year.

In the meantime we ask all comrades in Wales who have not yet done so to get in contact with the Aberystwyth group. Letters can be sent c/o Students Union, Laura Place, Aberystwyth.

fraternally,
Mike Sheehan,
Aberystwyth Anarchist Group.

Free fall

Dear Comrades,

While reading the October issue of *Anarchist Worker* I was rather disappointed to come across a piece of economic determinism in a paper which proclaims to emphasise the social nature of revolution.

I am referring to the article on the TUC at Brighton which uncritically states that the Law of the Falling Rate of Profit leads

us to believe that the capitalist mode of production has inbuilt tendencies to collapse, stagnate or fall into crisis.

I would like to point out that this law is by no means accepted as gospel by those Marxists who have attempted to develop a critical analysis of modern state monopoly capitalism.

The law has been rigorously examined by Paul Cardan in *Modern Capitalism and Revolution*, Solidarity, 2nd Edition, 1974 and Geoff Hodgson in *Trotsky and Fatalistic Marxism*, Spokesman Books, 1975. (See also Geoff Hodgson, *New Left Review* 84, March-April 1974, pp 55-82).

Cardan argues that the Law of the Falling Rate of Profit is (a) logically inconsistent, (b) empirically false,

Hodgson argues that the evidence presented by Glynn and Sutcliffe in an attempt to prove the Law of the Falling Rate of Profit does not in fact result from the forces originally identified by Marx.

Since both of their arguments are lengthy and detailed it would be unwise of me to attempt to duplicate them or summarise them here.

However I urge all those interested in developing a critique of traditional revolutionary theory to read the above mentioned articles.

In doing so we must reject the conception of the capitalist economy inexorably grinding its way towards its final collapse and the corresponding politics of waiting for the crisis.

We must recognise that there is now a high degree of state control in the British

economy and a 1930's style crash is most unlikely.

Of course I am not suggesting that we reject the theory of a crisis and it is quite clear that British capitalism is in a state of severe economic crisis at the present.

However we must accept that the causes, both objective and subjective, are so complex and diverse that they cannot be reduced to a simple equation.

We can only develop our theory through the investigation of concrete socio-economic convulsions from the point of view of practical revolutionary struggles.

yours fraternally
I.W. Brighton.

Shock probe

Hello,

Regarding the headline in the October *Anarchist Worker* "Millions trapped in 8 Hour Horror!" — it's really bad, it's the sort of thing you expect from the WRP.

Everyone I showed it to (anarchist or not) thought it was really bad, it's not the sort of thing you can analyse.

It's obviously just not on, you must have felt that when you thought it up, surely?

Well, I will analyse it 'cos I've got nowt else to do. Perhaps it was an attempt to relate to the 'man in the street' or maybe 'the working classes'.

I doubt it though, no one could be patronising enough to think that.

There are people going round who wouldn't be put off by that style.

It really reminded me of *Newsline* with a bit of *Watchtower* thrown in.

Perhaps you thought that a bit of sensationalism would catch people's eye, if so it's a very cheap trick, and from my experience doomed to failure in the long run.

Thanks for reading this far,

Michael Parkinson,
Newcastle.

Edcoll write:

As hoped, that headline provoked quite a lot of reaction. With this single exception, strangely enough, it was all favourable.

This letter is critical. Was the headline too frivolous — not serious enough for a revolutionary newspaper? How much should humour be a part of the revolutionary struggle?

Left publications can be boring, both in what they say and how they put it across, it's an acknowledged fact.

They are able to laugh neither at themselves nor at capitalism.

What they have to say is often lost in tangled logic; any 'emotion' is swept aside as always implicitly reactionary.

Our headline was meant to be a piss-take of papers like Rupert Murdoch's *News of the World* and *Sun*.

Newsline, however, uses headlines that are simple, but dead serious, not sensationalist.

It is a stronger criticism, however, if the impact of the headline detracted from the article itself.

Any comments on this, and discussion of the nature of 'work' are welcome.

Rally against sex discrimination

THE SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT and The Equal Pay Act were brought in through pressure from the women's movement and the labour movement.

But the law cannot force employers to give equal opportunity

to women any more than it can establish reasonable conditions for all workers.

From a leaflet produced by the rally planning committee:

"The real victories have been won by women who have had to engage in active struggles, as at Trico.

But what is won in pay in lost as unemployment soars and the cuts force women to take a greater burden of caring for children, the old and the sick, and, non-urgent operations — hysterectomies, abortions etc, are postponed for weeks or months."

Rally

The Rally will draw together the experiences of all those fighting for women's rights, from the most militant such as the occupation of the Elizabeth Garret Anderson hospital to those just beginning to connect the lack of women's

Cash needed

AFTER a gap of eight weeks, ANARCHIST WORKER is out again.

Why have two issues been missed? The answer: a cash flow crisis: in a word — money. AW has never been a self-supporting paper. It doesn't carry pages of advertisements, so revenue doesn't automatically come in; it survives on sales and the goodwill of supporters.

1976 saw the paper become increasingly adventurous in design. To get across libertarian communist politics to people outside the small circle of the left we wanted to make it attractive and easy to read, putting colours to good use. This all cost money.

opportunities with the exploitation of all workers.

The exchange of information and lessons will enable a start to be made to organise joint action on a national scale.

The rally should not be seen as an end in itself, but as a basis for future action and a focus for local discussion of the issues and a reminder that it is possible for women to fight for their rights and against attacks on their living standards.

AIMS & PRINCIPLES

- 1 Capitalism is a class society.
- 2 The basic irreconcilable contradiction within it is between the class which owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, the bourgeoisie, and the class who produce the agricultural and industrial wealth, the working class.
- 3 The social enslavement and exploitation of the working class forms the basis upon which modern capitalism stands, without which capitalism could not exist.
- 4 The state is the instrument of the ruling class. To destroy the power of the bourgeoisie, we must destroy the power of the state.
- 5 Russia and China are class societies in each of which a ruling class of administrators collectively owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, and in which a working class, the sole producer of all wealth, is exploited by that class. These states we define as corporate state capitalist in that the ruling class is totally integrated with the state, as is the trade union structure.
- 6 The class nature of society is reflected in all the dominant philosophies: class, race, sexual, social and personal relationships. The class relationships are expressed through all social relationships and generate attitudes such as sexism and racism.
- 7 The conflict of interests between the two classes generates the class struggle. In the history of society, the class struggle has been the primary factor in the determination of the form and structure of society.
- 8 The day to day struggles of the working class reflect the class struggle. The position of the working class as the collective producer of society's wealth makes it the only

force capable of replacing capitalism by a classless society. The existing defensive organisations thrown up by the working class, such as trade unions, whose bureaucracy is increasingly incorporated into capitalism, are not adequate for the smashing of the capitalist system, and the building of a free, classless society. However, the working class rank and file organisations such as democratically controlled shop steward committees, factory committees, strike committees, are developing through the place of work. These organisations are the forerunners of workers councils, which are the expression of working class power. Outside of work, the working class has developed other forms of organisation that are potentially revolutionary, such as tenants action committees, rent strike committees, and tenant-worker joint action committees.

9 Dual power exists before the power of the bourgeoisie is smashed. If the working class are successful, then the organisation of the needs of society will be firmly based in working class hands. This is the collective working class in power, in which the working class destroys all remnants of bourgeois society, such as racial hatred, the family and hierarchies. This is the period of transition between capitalism and libertarian communism.

10 From our analysis we reach the inevitable conclusion that capitalism cannot be reformed in any fundamental way and that the only meaningful transformation of society is through the development of working class organisations and by means of a violent social revolution. Violence becomes inevitable for the working class to defend themselves against the onslaughts of the

dispossessed ruling class.

The role of the AWA

- 1 The task of the AWA is to aid the preparation of the working class for their seizure of power. The establishment of an anarchist society is something that has to be consciously fought for by the working class. The AWA is a conscious organised expression of libertarian communist ideas. Through the shared experience, information and knowledge of the class struggle, AWA must be able to analyse and disseminate the nature of the problems facing the working class and apply these lessons in the class struggle.
- 2 The AWA aims to offer a lead within the working class movement by example and explanation; and to build into the movement a high level of political consciousness so that it is capable of defeating capitalism and fighting the creation of a new ruling class. Fundamental to this is the contradiction between the organisation as a tendency within the class and its being in ideological advance of it. This contradiction can only be resolved with the establishment of a libertarian communist society. During the period of transition, the potential basis for the emergence of a new ruling class is progressively removed so that the need for a separately organised libertarianism will decrease.
- 3 The AWA seeks to develop and support working class organisations which are the forerunners of workers councils and to develop in them revolutionary consciousness. The AWA does not seek independent power for itself

but seeks to work through the working class organisations.

- 4 The AWA seeks to establish international links with libertarian revolutionary organisations and groups with an aim of establishing an international libertarian communist movement.
- 5 The AWA seeks to combat attitudes of sexism, racism and national chauvinism as attitudes that help maintain class society.

The form our organisation takes is a realisation of libertarian perspectives in the current situation. We recognise that it is not a social model of a free society and must itself develop in interaction with the developing liberation of society.

- [1] We are a membership organisation.
- [2] Membership is open to those who agree with our analysis of society and its transformation, and who work towards this end.
- [3] The main policy making body will be the National Conference. Between National Conferences there will be held bi-monthly Delegate Conferences to co-ordinate and carry out National Conference decisions, to decide interim policy and to initiate activity. Delegates are mandatable and rotated. Delegate Conference decision can be revoked by National Conference.
- [4] We seek to establish AWA groups in all areas, not only geographical but also industrial, educational, etc. Groups interpret National and Delegate Conference decisions to relate tactics to their local experience.

As agreed at the National Conference in London 31 August — 1 September 1974.

A Special Supplement was rushed out when the news first hit that Marie and Noel Murray were on trial in Dublin for their lives, accused of killing an off-duty policeman. For AW, this was the first time a supplement was tried as an intervention and proved to be very effective in the campaign which has eventually saved their lives (though Marie could still face the gallows after her re-trial), as reprint followed reprint.

5,000 ANARCHIST WORKER broadsheets were handed out on the big November 17 London anti-cuts demonstration linking the slashed public expenditure with the criminal trespass proposals, then about to be presented to parliament, building for the Campaign Against a Criminal Trespass Law conference later that month in Reading.

Also in November a 4-page supplement, the largest yet, was run off and included in every copy of AW on the 1956 Hungarian revolution. This was not history for history's sake, but a significant example of autonomous working class activity. A former member of the British YCL and CP asked us to send her a bundle saying that the events of Hungary 56 broke the CP. It was like a slap in the face, she said, for people who lived their whole life for the Party, and very important for working people now to know what really happened then.

All this cost money, a lot of it.

For the past three months, bookshops had been receiving their copies of ANARCHIST WORKER through the Publications Distribution Co-operative.

This has meant the proportion of AW going into bookshops going up to 20% of the print run, and it getting to many more towns than we have been able to do ourselves; something for which we are very thankful to the Co-op. Going through the PDC, however, has added to the cash flow problem, as we are having to wait longer for the money than previously.

On top of all this was the appeal for a Headliner — a vital time- and cost- saving piece of equipment — which has meant that the donations previously subsidizing the loss AW makes each month were going elsewhere.

The financial burden on members of the Association in all areas of the country has been particularly heavy in the past few months.

For instance the commitment to Murrays defence, especially in Scotland and the Midlands, weighed heavily on members' purses, as has the fight against the cutbacks in public expenditure on a local level, anti-racist work, etc.

Given the rising costs of printing and distributing AW, also, it is difficult to see how it ever gets out at all!

However, since ANARCHIST WORKER was launched last May, our circulation has more than doubled.

As the crisis gets worse, more and more people are beginning to question the discredited remedies of leaving everything to market forces on the one hand, and more nationalisation on the other, and are searching for an alternative.

This makes it vital that the ideas of self-organisation and self-management are spread to as many sections of the working class as possible.

If we are to do this, we need to expand the paper and bring it out fortnightly — or even weekly! But without help and money from everyone, this will remain just a dream.

We have now raised enough money to pay for the headliner so that any money you send us from now on will bring us that much closer to the day AW appears more often. At the same time we still need to increase circulation; so why not take a bundle and sell where you work, where you live, to your friends.

Articles are also very welcome: no one who writes for AW is a professional journalist.

Please make cheques/POs payable to 'AWA General Fund' and send them to AWA, 13 Coltman Street, Hull.

Anarchist Worker



Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

Abortion rights

OBTAINING a safe abortion will become even more difficult if the Bill to be submitted to Parliament on 25th February becomes law.

This emerged from the National Abortion Rights Tribunal held at the Central Hall, Westminster, on Saturday 29th January.

The Tribunal, which was organised by the National Abortion Campaign and attended by several thousand people, was a response to the resignation of the pro-abortionists from the Select Committee set up to examine the workings of the 1967 Abortion Act. Despite the defeat of the James White Bill 2 years ago, the committee has again recommended the tightening up of the abortion law.

The new bill, to be introduced by William Benyon, Conservative MP for Bucks, is based on these recommendations and is expected to include the following provisions:

1. The reduction of the time-limit by which abortions must be performed from 28 to 20 weeks.
2. The condition that the two doctors recommending an abortion may not be connected, and that at least one of them must have been in practise for five years — the only other duty for which a doctor needs 5 years of experience is the signing of a cremation certificate!
3. The banning of links between abortion referral agencies and clinics. A measure clearly aimed at the charitable institutions which carry out almost half the non-NHS abortions in Britain.

This will make the whole process far more time-consuming and will considerably curtail women's chances of obtaining an abortion within the legal time-limit.

The bill will also make it much more difficult for foreign women to obtain abortions in Britain. Further, anonymity will be granted to persons bringing complaints against abortion clinics and in such cases police will be granted right of access to all records. This will clearly make it far easier for SPUC and its supporters to harass both clinics and patients.

The introduction of the bill comes at a time when the already inadequate provisions for abortion under the NHS are being severely curtailed by government cuts in welfare expenditure. Given the attitudes to abortion in our society, it is inevitable that abortion facilities will be among the first to go.

The majority of Area Health Authorities have never complied with their legal obligations in this field. The 1967 Abortion Act

stipulated that all women who satisfied the legal requirements for an abortion should be able to have it carried out on the National Health Service. This has never been the case and in fact the proportion of NHS abortions has consistently declined since 1968 to its present level of 50%.

In some areas (e.g. Birmingham) it is as low as 12 per cent.

The cutting back of abortion facilities — and the complete closure of some units, such as the one at the Elizabeth Garret Anderson Hospital in London, will hit particularly hard at poor and working class women who will not be able to afford the £60 for a charity abortion.

While the present abortion law is limited in its support of a woman's right to choose, our immediate task is obviously to prevent its replacement by even more restrictive legislation.

Evidence submitted to the tribunal from all over the country proved that large numbers of women and G.P.s are strongly in favour of the 1967 Act, and the support should be mobilised to counter the extremely effective campaigning of the anti-abortion organisations.

However, we should not lose sight of the fact that the Act falls far short of establishing the right of every woman to free, safe and untraumatic abortion on request, and leaves us, totally at the mercy of doctors, consultants and health authorities.

So let's mobilise to defeat the Benyon Bill — but remember that this is only the beginning. Free abortion on demand will only be achieved with the mass support of working class women. We can enlist this support by campaigning for abortion within Trade Unions and the Community and by linking the demands for abortion and women's health care generally with our fight against the cuts.

NAC is organising a demonstration on 25th February followed by a public meeting, and these should be supported by as many people as possible.

Radical Science Journal

No.5 now available £1.00 136 pages
Contents: PATRICK PARRINDER—The Black Wave: science and social consciousness in modern science fiction; DAVID TRIESMAN—The Institute of Psychiatry Sackings; BOB YOUNG—Science is Social Relations. Letter: LOUP VERLET—La Course ou la Vie (Publish or Live).

Subscription: £3.00 (individual), £9.00 (institutional) for 3 issues post paid from: Radical Science Journal, 9 Poland St, W1.

LAMBETH WASTELAND

ON JANUARY 8, 11,000 pages of High Court summons and affidavits, were served on the 130 'illegal' squatters, both families and single people of Villa Road.

Villa Road is due for demolition in order to create another pile of rubble and corrugated iron — officially termed an 'open space'.

Lambeth council played a really dirty trick here: at the same time as entering into negotiations for rehousing the squatters, they were working hard on the court case for forced evictions.

A local Trades Council enquiry presented a report which would allow for the rehabilitation of the houses as well as a play-space — but for the council to consider this would have been to admit the stupidity of their own planning.

For Villa Road, when faced with a local building workers' ban on demolishing good, empty properties, the council brought in lump workers to do the dirty work.

Lambeth has the worst housing shortage of any London borough, with a waiting list of over 17,000 homeless families.

A common sight all over the borough are acres of fenced-off wasteland and streets of boarded-up and rapidly deteriorating empty houses.

Yet the Labour-controlled council housing committee has just decided to demolish 49 houses at St Agnes Place, as well as Villa Road, for the sake of another 1½ acres of open space.

This is a part of a plan to link a park of 12½ acres to another of 36 acres.

But the money for this will not be available until the 1980's, and even then, this may not come about, since the GLC opposes the closing of the road itself, as do the police.

Over the last fifteen years, while thousands of families have been denied housing, half the perfectly good houses in the street were allowed to fall into disrepair.

Last December, despite opposition from the community of squatters and council tenants, workmen, 'protected' by dozens of police moved in to gut two houses.

They tore out floorboards, windows,

ripped off roof slates and sawed through joists, making the houses uninhabitable.

The council vandal squad started work immediately after the eviction of an old woman, who was led away in tears after having lived there for thirty years. This was done to prevent squatters moving in.

But it gets worse: Lambeth have now refused to consider an offer by the Lambeth Self-Help Housing Association to renovate and keep in repair all the houses at no cost to the council.

This would mean housing for 300 people for a few years.

The council has also rejected out of hand a report by two independent architects which states that the houses could be given a 30 year life in spite of the council vandalism.

Lambeth SHHA used to operate 5½ years ago as a small group of committed squatters who were given licences for limited periods and eventually rehoused by the council.

They financed their own repairs, and have now rehoused over 300 families through their building co-operative, and a grant from the Housing Corporation.

The co-op has a work-force of ten, six of whom are employed through the Job Creation Scheme, and three of whom are school-leavers.

Compare this with Lambeth council's record, succeeding in rehousing only 300 families a year, and paying out £500,000 a year in bed-and-breakfast bills for the homeless.

In fact, rehabilitation by LSHHA would generate a yearly income of rates, but Lambeth prefer to spend their money on bed & breakfast and demolishing good houses to keep squatters out.

Demolish!

The GLC predicts that Lambeth will have a declining population: Lambeth council is doing its best to make this come true.

A leading Tory councillor has said: 'To make sure that the extra population does not stay we should demolish houses that encourage them to do so'!

Lambeth are determined to stamp out squatting, because it forces them to actually start housing homeless families.

Squatters draw attention to council wastage of housing stock, property controlled not by people's needs, but by an insane system.

S.D.



SOCIALIST TEACHER

out MARCH 6th

Contents include 'Problems of 1977 NUT Conference'; 'Unofficial, official strike action'; 'The Black Papers'.

30p from S.T., 221 Westcombe Hill, SE3.

PEOPLES NEWS SERVICE

Voluntary workers needed urgently by PNS, a non-sectarian left news and info service. No particular skills needed — just political commitment.

Peoples News Service, 142 Drummond St., London NW1.

COUNTERACT

CounterAct needs two women for a play on nursery provision and women's relationship to capitalism. Although acting/musical ability useful, commitment to women's movement and revolutionary socialism essential. £35 p.w. (touring), £31 p.w. (rehearsing). Drivers needed.

Contact:
CounterAct, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1. 251 4977 or (eves) 267 5059.

WORKERS COUNCILS

by Anton Pannekoek

An English edition of this classic pamphlet is available from Social Revolution Box 217, c/o 142 Drummond Street, London NW1, for 60p + 15p postage.

What's on

You are welcome to advertise your events here, but please remember it costs money to bring out AW, so donations are welcomed.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST A CRIMINAL TRESPASS LAW

MAR. 5th — MERTHYR TYDFIL
 Wales CACTL Day Conference. Sponsors include AUEW/TASS Welsh Divisional Council. Details from Jeremy Gass, 31 Monmouth Rd. Abergavenny, Monmouth.

MARXISM & THE MASS MEDIA

a two-weekly series of open forums from January to May.

Organised by media workers, mainly from Equity and NUJ, in the IMG but they will be of an open nature with, hopefully, active participation of all shades of socialist opinion.

Various people, most of whom are not in the IMG, will briefly introduce each session, but discussion will not necessarily be limited to the framework they set.

FEB. 20th at 7pm

The mass media and the class struggle — introduced by Paul Walton, co-author of *Bad News. Sexism & Racism in the mass media* — introduced by Tunde Anthony, co-editor of *Black Struggle* and Mandy Merck of *Time Out* and *Red Rag*. For venues see *Time Out* Agitprop column.

SCOTTISH LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION (GLASGOW)

Public discussion will be held regularly on the first and third Mondays of each month at the St. Bride's Centre, Rosevale St. (off Dumbarton Rd) Partick, Glasgow at 7.30pm. The subjects so far are:

FEB. 7th — 'Nationalism'

FEB. 21st — 'Fight to live'

MAR. 7th — 'Education'

MAR. 21st — 'Anarchism and the other left'

Further details: 041-637 7360 or 336 7895.

MERAG

FEB. 25th

MERAG Public Meeting — 'Arabs in Israel: Organisation and Resistance'. Conway Hall, London at 7pm. Details: 01-278 9308.

KENTISH TOWN FILMS

FEB. 17th — 'NOT A PENNY ON THE RENT'. A 1968 film about the GLC tenants associations and their first rent strike, and **'ARISE YE WORKERS'** on the London docks strike and the imprisonment of the Pentonville 5.

MAR. 10th — 'CAMPAMENTO'. Chilean peasants fighting eviction from the church-owned land they took over to build a shanty town. And **'A HOUSING FILM'** made by Student Community Housing, this film looks at different types of homeless people and accommodation available for them and at actions that can be taken against homelessness.

At North London Poly, Prince of Wales Road, London NW1, Room B8 at 5.30pm.

OXFORD LIBERTARIAN CONFERENCE ON FASCISM RACISM & NATIONALISM

FEB. 19th/20th

Papers so far promised: 'The rise of fascism in Germany and the analysis of Reich', 'The fascist threat today and how it should be met.'

WRITE NOW for credentials, information on accommodation, other details, to Oxford AWA, c/o EOA Books, 34 Cowley Road, Oxford.

LIBERTARIAN STUDENTS NETWORK

is now functioning. If you want to hear more please contact: Peter Baker, A06 Allesley House, Rootes Residences, The University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL.

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 AWA, 13 Coltman Street, Hull, Humberside